

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 12659

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM
SUBJECT: 34TH SESSION HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION - WESTERN
GROUP MEETING

1. MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON HUMAN RIGHTS MET
DECEMBER 15 AND 21 TO DISCUSS ITEMS THAT WILL BE
CONSIDERED DURING 34TH SESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 1978.

2. IN ADDITION TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS,
UGANDA, THE CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE AND SOCIAL
ECONOMIC VS. CIVIL POLITICAL RIGHTS, SEVERAL MEMBERS
FLAGGED THE WESTERN SAHARA AS A POTENTIALLY CONTENTIOUS
PROBLEM FOR FRANCE. NIALL MCDERMOT (WHO ATTENDED
DECEMBER 21 MEETING) REPORTED THAT THE NGO GROUP WHICH
MET IN SICILY DRAFTED CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE BUT
THE DOCUMENT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE SWEDES WHO WANT
TO USE THE DRAFT DECLARATION AGAINST TORTURE AS THE
CONVENTION. MISSION WILL FORWARD DOCUMENT TO DEPT
WHEN IT IS RECEIVED FROM ICJ.

3. CONSENSUS DURING MEETINGS WAS THAT SOVIETS AND CUBA
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WILL ATTEMPT TO SPEND AN INORDINATE AMOUNT OF TIME ON
SOUTH AFRICA, ISRAEL AND CHIL THUS LIMITING DISCUSSION
TIME ON SUCH ISSUES AS THE HIGH COMMISSIONER AND UGANDA.
CANADIAN REP SUGGESTED THAT WESTERN GROUP TO DEFEAT
NONALIGNED TACTICS OF AVOIDING CRUCIAL ISSUES INCLUDE
STRONG STATEMENTS ABOUT UGANDA, ETC., IN EACH STATEMENT
THEY MAKE REGARDLESS OF THE ITEM UNDER CONSIDERATION.

4. CANADA WILL AGAIN RAISE THE ISSUE OF CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS IN ORDER TO KEEP THE ISSUE ALIVE. THEY HAVE ASKED FOR SUPPORT FROM ALL WEO'S.

5. CANADIAN REP AGREED INITIALLY TO CHAIR WESTERN GROUP MEETINGS DURING HUMAN RIGHTS SESSION BUT WILL CONFIRM IN JANUARY AFTER CONFERRING WITH OTTAWA. CANADIANS DID GIVE FIRM COMMITMENT TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR FIRST MEETING OF WESTERN GROUP MORNING OF FEBRUARY 6.

6. ATTENDING THESE MEETINGS WERE: AUSTRALIA, CANADA, THE NETHERLANDS, AND NEW ZEALAND. THE NETHERLANDS WILL HOST A MEETING OF THE WESTERN GROUP JANUARY 10, 1978.
VANDEN HEUVEL

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